In the Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). In a dual damascene patterning process, an etching method which comprises:

providing a semiconductor structure with functional elements formed in a substrate, a dielectric disposed on the substrate, a photoresist etching mask above the dielectric, and a polymer intermediate layer between the etching mask and the dielectric layer;

etching the dielectric layer and the polymer intermediate layer for the dual damascene patterning with a CF_4 ARC open process with high selectivity with respect to the photoresist of the etching mask, said CF_4 ARC open process including:

adjusting RF power between 550 and 650 watts,
adjusting pressure between 80 and 120 mtorr,
adjusting CF_4 flow between 35 and 45 sccm,
adjusting CHF_3 flow between 17 and 23 sccm,
adjusting Ar flow between 80 and 120 sccm, and
adjusting O_2 flow between 5 and 7 sccm.

Claim 2 (Original). The etching process according to claim 1, wherein the dielectric is an oxide layer.

Claim 3 (Original). The etching process according to claim 1, which comprises setting an etching time to at least twice an etching time of an O_2/N_2 ARC open process.

Claim 4 (Original). The etching process according to claim 3, which comprises setting the etching time, depending on an etching depth, to approximately 140 s.

Claim 5 (Original). The etching process according to claim 1, which comprises performing the etching process in an etching chamber with plasma assistance.

Claim 6 (Original). The etching process according to claim 5, which comprises etching with an RF power of approximately 600 watts.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Original). The etching process according to claim 7, which comprises setting a CF_4 flow during the ARC open process to approximately 40 sccm and setting the CHF_3 flow to approximately 20 sccm.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended). An etching process for oxide patterning in a semiconductor structure, which comprises:

providing a substrate with functional elements formed therein, an oxide layer on the substrate, an etching mask formed of a photoresist above the oxide layer, and a polymer intermediate layer forming an antireflection layer between the etching mask and the oxide layer;

patterning the oxide layer during a dual damascene patterning for a metallization;

etching the polymer intermediate layer and the oxide layer in a common CF_4/CHF_3 etching process with high selectivity with respect to the photoresist~~; and~~ , the etching process including:

~~thereby adjusting an etching gas flow for CF_4 to 35 - 45 sccm and an etching gas flow for CHF_3 to 17 - 23 sccm in the common etching process.~~

adjusting RF power between 550 and 650 watts,
adjusting pressure between 80 and 120 mtorr,
adjusting CF_4 flow between 35 and 45 sccm,
adjusting CHF_3 flow between 17 and 23 sccm,
adjusting Ar flow between 80 and 120 sccm, and
adjusting O_2 flow between 5 and 7 sccm.

Claim 10 (Original). The etching process according to claim 9, which comprises setting the etching time, depending on an etching depth, to approximately 140 s.

Claim 11 (Original). The etching process according to claim 9, which comprises performing the etching process in an etching chamber with plasma assistance.

Claim 12 (Original). The etching process according to claim 11, which comprises etching with an RF power of approximately 600 watts.

Claim 13 (Original). The etching process according to claim 9, which comprises setting the etching gas flow for CF_4 to approximately 40 sccm and the etching gas flow for CHF_3 to approximately 20 sccm in the common etching process.

Claim 14 (Canceled).